

EXHIBIT NO. 4
DATE 2-17-11
BILL NO. SB202

Senate Bill 202 – February 17, 2011

TAPROOM HOURS:

I'll have to admit I'm a bit confused about the alcohol consumption/DUI issue! It seems to me that licenses to serve alcohol were initially issued on the basis of population within cities boundaries. Those licenses have been issued to the businesses now operating, which are employing an existing staff, and have invested a significant amount of time and money into their venture. So here come the TAP ROOMS who do not have to make the same investment of time and money to compete against those established businesses and their investments. According to some folks, this seems like a good idea.

My first questions are, just how many beer drinkers are there in a given area, and how much beer are they going to drink and stay within the limits (.08) of a DUI? If we are truly concerned about safety on our roadways, why are we encouraging more alcoholic consumption in any form? Given the fact that the Micro brews have an alcoholic content well above the national brands; wouldn't 48 ounces put most people above the .08 limit?

If we are to have vehicle roadblocks set up at times along the major corridors, aren't we really encouraging more people to get pulled over, or worse yet become involved in an accident injuring or destroying lives. It seems the only entities benefiting would be those who collect revenue as the result of DUI fines. I can't see where there could be a net gain in jobs by encouraging TAP ROOMS, as existing establishments would loose business to these new establishments who have not made the same investments. I doubt if anybody needs more time to reach .08, so why extend the Tap Rooms hours of operation.

Language in SB202 even allows patrons to stay in the TAP ROOMS (drinking beer) until 11pm. **It was my understanding the Tap Rooms originally were established to allow a person to sample a product, and then purchase more at a licensed establishment.** Please consider the hundreds of millions of dollars invested by Montana's bar and tavern establishments, and the time they have spent to keep their businesses operating.

Also, please consider the fact that some TAP ROOMS may now in fact, be operating as bars or taverns by (as reported by many observers) serving larger portions of their products well beyond the 48 ounce limits provided by current law. If you allow the new language as proposed in SB 202, you would be continuing to allow an unfair advantage to be given to these TAP ROOMS; as they would (in effect) be operating as bars and taverns without the large investments of time, money, and legal regulations required to purchase a beer and liquor license. This is grossly unfair to the current establishments.

Please vote NO on SB 202!

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